

Yardley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133996
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	316230
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	629
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Kelcey
Headteacher	Jan Moss
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Harvey Road Yardley Birmingham B26 1TD
Telephone number	0121 4643235
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a large primary school. Half of the pupils are of White British backgrounds, the other half is made up of pupils from Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Caribbean. The proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language is low. In 2007 the school had the National Healthy Schools Award renewed and it was awarded the Foundation Level of the Department for Children, Schools and Families International Award. In 2006 the school achieved its third Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education. Its ethos is built upon its values of 'Respect, Happiness, Health, Self-esteem and Honesty' and these are reflected in pupils' good personal development and well-being. As one parent said, 'Our children leave this school as confident individuals who show respect and tolerance.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplary, and the school's outstanding provision in music enables pupils to contribute to good community cohesion. The recent implementation of a new themed curriculum and good opportunities to learn French, Spanish, German and Italian are contributing to pupils' understanding of global cultures. The school is a harmonious place where individuals are valued: 'We are one big family here', said one member of the school council.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with levels of attainment below those expected nationally. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, but overall satisfactory progress in the other areas of learning. There are missed opportunities to develop early writing and number formation skills especially in outdoor play. On entry to Year 1, attainment is below that seen nationally in communication, language and literacy, problem solving, reasoning and numeracy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory, but inconsistent progress because of variations in teaching. They attain standards just below those expected nationally in writing and mathematics; nevertheless, recent strategies focusing on improving standards in reading are now paying dividends with pupils in Year 2 being able to segment and blend their sounds more effectively. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is good, but because teaching across the key stage is inconsistent, pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall.

Teaching is satisfactory, but not all teachers use information from good assessment procedures to build on pupils' prior learning. While higher attaining pupils are now being more consistently challenged, pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not always having their needs met in lessons. Over time, their progress is satisfactory, because of targeted support, but valuable opportunities for learning in lessons are sometimes missed.

The headteacher has done a great deal of work to bring about innovation and creativity in the curriculum. It promotes good attitudes and contributes to pupils' good behaviour. Pupils are interested in their work and want to learn. They know about staying safe, healthy lifestyles and make a good contribution to the local community. They are prepared appropriately for their next stage of learning. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care of pupils is very strong in this school, all safeguarding systems are robust, but academic guidance is only satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but not all of them offer sufficient guidance as to what pupils need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, but the monitoring of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is not undertaken often enough. School self-evaluation is broadly accurate if too optimistic in places. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve as demonstrated by the very recent progress made in reading in Years 1 and 2.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the EYFS is satisfactory. Children make steady progress from a low baseline, but missed opportunities for acquiring basic skills through play, including the outdoors, prevent achievement being any better than satisfactory. Children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and this reflects their positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Children's welfare is of paramount importance to the staff and good systems are in place to promote their well-being. The children show commitment to learning and begin to develop initiative in choosing appropriate activities for themselves. With all of their many differences of background and culture, children work and play in harmony together. They enjoy their lessons and develop good habits of healthy living during breaks for drinking water and eating fruit.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers and teaching assistants plan and work cooperatively to provide a range of suitable experiences within a spacious and visually stimulating environment. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced. The three classrooms are safe and secure within a well-equipped, carefully organised and well-managed environment. The satisfactory provision meets children's physical, emotional and social needs appropriately. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff record individual children's progress, but recognise that they need to develop their skills of observation through shared moderation to ensure greater precision in assessment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that senior managers and middle managers keep a more rigorous check on pupils' rates of progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Raise the quality of teaching by matching work more consistently to the needs of all pupils and by ensuring that marking informs them of what they have to do to improve.
- Ensure that teaching of early writing and number is more rigorous in EYFS and that the outdoor learning environment provides purposeful play opportunities.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

By the time pupils leave the school they acquire average standards. Their achievements are satisfactory, but the best rates of progress are in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is good. Evidence from national test results, assessment, observations and pupils' work shows that pupil's progress is variable over time and in different parts of the school. In Year 2, 2008 test results show too few pupils achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 this is addressed because of the high expectations in Years 5 and 6. At times, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons because not all teachers plan with their individual education plans in mind. When working in targeted groups, these pupils make better progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress particularly once they have developed confidence in their new language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' enjoyment of school shows in their positive attitudes, good behaviour and satisfactory attendance. Their good personal skills and satisfactory basic skills development give a sound platform for success in the future. Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables pupils to gain a deep understanding of multicultural Britain. Pupils' participation in the outstanding provision of music, where pupils sing carols and perform for the local community, makes a good contribution to local community cohesion. Pupils are true ambassadors of their school. They talk proudly of their teachers and all that the school offers: 'We are safe in school because staff care about us', said one Year 6 pupil. Pupils welcome diversity and are keen to learn about customs and values of others. They talk at length about healthy eating and the effect of exercise on the body through Huff and Puff and Wake and Shake sessions.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy lessons when teachers make learning interesting through lively teaching and stimulating activities. There are, nevertheless, variances across year groups in the quality of teaching. All teachers share learning objectives with their pupils and use information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning well, but sometimes they do not use assessment data sufficiently well to match tasks to build upon pupils' prior attainment. This restricts progress. A strategic decision to place a very capable teacher in the lower juniors is starting to pay dividends, but this is not yet reflected in the end of Year 6 achievement due to its very recent implementation. Support staff make a valid contribution to learning, but in some classes, they are not as well deployed as they could be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is vibrant and is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and outstanding music provision. The teaching of four modern foreign languages enables pupils to learn about life in Europe and makes a very strong contribution to their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Themed activities such as learning about 'our place in space' and the recently introduced curriculum bring learning to life and create opportunities for pupils to widen their interests. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the wide range of clubs and this develops their personal skills successfully. Good opportunities for pupils to develop effective ways of dealing with their emotions through a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education contribute to pupils' self-esteem. Links for literacy, numeracy and ICT are developing satisfactorily, but are not yet consistently underpinning most topic work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents are generally pleased with the school's efforts to ensure their children's welfare. A small minority would like to be informed regularly of steps taken to sort out any minor complaints. Safeguarding of pupils is good. Robust systems are in place to protect them. Pupils say that they always have an adult to turn to should the need arise. Good tracking procedures

of pupils' progress are in place, but this information is not always sufficiently well used to plan future work. The quality of teachers' marking is variable. It is regular, but does not always inform pupils as to what they need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The drive of the headteacher to give her pupils the best start in life has created a team that shares her vision for improvement. Leaders and managers have a realistic, but at times, over positive view of certain aspects of the school's provision. The school development plan is rightly focused on the correct priorities for raising standards, but success criteria are not sufficiently robust to ensure tangible outcomes for monitoring its success. The headteacher, aided by the deputy headteacher, analyse pupils' progress data and put intervention strategies in place, but the effectiveness of their actions is not always evaluated quickly enough and acted upon by other senior leaders and class teachers. This is a contributory factor to pupils' satisfactory rather than good achievement. Governance is good. Governors fulfil their duty of critical friend and fulfil statutory requirements. Good monitoring of the school's provision has been undertaken. The school has a good reputation in the community and does all it can to involve the local community in its work and so promote community cohesion.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yardley Primary School, Birmingham, B26 1TD

It was lovely to meet you all when we came to visit your school. Thank you very much to all of you who spoke to us in lessons, around school, in the playground and in the meetings we had with you. A special thank you to the choir, we so enjoyed your singing. We think that your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. There are some outstanding and good aspects in your school. Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, is outstanding. You know so much about other faiths, what is right and wrong and you collaborate very well with your friends. You have good opportunities to learn different languages and you know a lot about a variety of different cultures. You contribute well to the community. I'm sure that local residents will be delighted with your choir singing at Christmas. You are well behaved, have positive attitudes to learning and attend school regularly.

Everybody really cares about you, treats you as individuals and your headteacher really wants the best for you. Your governors do a really good job. We think that you can do even better in your learning and we have asked your hard-working headteacher and teachers to help you get even higher standards by:

- keeping a more regular check on your progress in English, mathematics and science, especially those of you who find learning difficult
- improving the quality of teaching by making sure that information from assessment is used to plan your next steps of learning and that teachers' marking shows you what you need to do to improve
- for those of you who are in the Reception classes, we have asked your teachers to help you form your letters and numbers correctly and to make sure that when you play outdoors, you have more opportunities for learning.

You can help by telling your teachers if the work they set is too easy or difficult for you and take note of their marking. The youngest ones of you need to concentrate more on forming your letters and numbers correctly. Your teachers work hard for you and you, in turn, need to continue to do your very best.

We wish you, your families and your teachers all the best for the future. Yours faithfully

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley Lead inspector